

DILEMMA

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ABSTRACT

A man comes back with great pains to return two hundred rupees he has been overpaid by oversight. The erring cashier is immensely grateful. It could have cost him his job. The cashier discusses it with his collaborator. That reminds the collaborator of a similar situation in her life a year back.

She and her future husband landed a purse loaded with money and other stuff. It was their “rickshaw puller” who found it first. Then began their futile search for the owner, with whom was the purse ultimately left is interesting to see. The Hamlet like indecisiveness haunts there still. Although it also connected their nuptial bond.

KEYWORDS: Ambivalence, Decline of Moral Values, Confusion & Conflict

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INTRODUCTION

Resolution of any conflict is important whether it is outer or inner. Sometimes it becomes difficult to reach a decision. Various things affect the work, behavior and attitude of a person in the world now-a-days. The story reflects the situation and circumstances that affected a person's honesty, generosity and thinking, and the inner conflict that compromise the conclusion.

The story focuses on the situation caused by social change and the decline of moral values that immensely tells upon the behavior and the notion of common people. There is still space for help, assistance and inspiration in the rush and the hurry and bustle of the world. We are compelled by the pragmatic consideration that leave us in the middle, but the conscientious invariably finds the way out.

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COMPLETE STORY

Dinner was nice, Good night said Misha and we parted for our next meeting in college. Misha was my colleague and a close friend. It was my first wedding anniversary party. We haven't encouraged a great gathering, but arranged dinner for some of our close friends. Actually, my husband invited some of his friends and I invited Misha only as she was the closest and the dearest.

You must be tired Radha, as I am. Did you notice Rupa's dance, she danced madly. Friends really made our day. "Unforgettable Moments". Madav Said.

I gave him a quizzical look. It's been 11:30. Let's sleep. Tomorrow is our working day Madav. I replied.

We were tired, but the hangover of the party did not allow us to sleep. Still somehow we both slept.

Tring Tring – the morning alarm rang. I went in the kitchen made tea for both of us. The routine of that day was also the same as we follow it on week days. We had our bed tea together and then we started our daily chores.

Radha, I have a meeting in my office today, so I have to leave early. Don't cook breakfast for me. Madav said.

Ok will cook your favorite Chena pudding for dessert tonight I replied.

Wow, that will rock, he said, and left.

Ting Tong - The doorbell rang. It was Misha. She always came to pick me. We both go together to the college in her Scooty. That day also we were ready to leave, we wore our helmets and moved ahead. The morning breeze was cool. It was 9 AM, Monday morning.

How beautiful the weather is? It's been three years working in the same college canteen Radha, Menu is like printed in our minds isn't it Misha asked. I smiled.

What have you decided for today? – I asked.

I will bake plum pastry today – Misha replied.

What's your thought about snacks Radha? ; She asked.

Not yet decided; let see what I will pick from as you said "printed menu" options. We both laughed.

We reached the college in 15 min. We both started our work. It's been, 9:15 AM. Mine was snacks department so I have to accomplish my work faster. People can come any time after 10:15 AM. I have decided to cook grilled pesto sandwich, coffee and a bowl full of fritters which was complementary. Sometimes we offer ready made packed chips, complimentary; but that's only when I made any time-taking snack recipe.

Tanishi's counter is on my left. Her duty was to cook lunch. Then Misha's Bakery took place. My counter was the first so I have to finish my work early.

I finished all my work and told Bhairav to make the arrangements, set the plates, decorate the counter etc.

My work was to cook and rest was Bhairav's responsibility. I sat at the corner chair and was giving instructions to

Bhairav. Bhairav was 23 years old tall young and well-mannered boy. He was very dutiful and honest. His elder brother recommended him for this job. He was a new comer. Before Bhairav his brother Shambhu was serving both snacks and lunch. But the work was now divided into these two. So Shambhu had only to help Tanishi in the lunch counter. Misha did not have any helper.

It's been 10:15 AM – time started for snacks. All the gathering was there at the counter; Bhairav was busy in serving. I was sitting and watching everything. Within half an hour the work was almost done. All of a sudden a boy came at the counter. He was gasping. He said – You gave me 200 rupees instead of 100. Bhairav saw his face with smile and said thank you. The boy smiled and left. Bhairav checked the account book; he realized that he was mistaken at his calculations. He came to me and said; madam, the boy was very nice. I did the blunder. If it would caught, either I would be fined for 100 rupees or might be fired for this carelessness. After all this is my first month working over here.

Our management is not so cruel Bhairav, relax. That was just a mistake which now is corrected. I patted his back and said, and we both wound up the work. Bhairav's duty was over but I had to wait for Misha and of course we were not supposed to leave before 2 PM. That was the rule of the college. It was 12:00 and for 2 hours I had no work. I sat back on my chair the matter of 100 rupees reminded me an incident of my life. The boy was really honest, I thought, but we could not be honest every time. Sometimes situation did not allow us for ...

It was the memory when one year back I took Madhav to my home town Kripapur for the first time, to meet my parents. Actually, our parents were convinced about our marriage, but they told me to took Madhav with me as they wanted to meet him. Before that, they just talked to him on phone calls and of course I told them a lot about Madhav, but it was their first face to face meeting.

I was very excited to meet my parents. We reached there by train and we took a rickshaw for home. It was 5:30 PM. The evening was beautiful; the sun was setting and the wind was cool. Weather looked pleasant as nature was also welcoming us. We both were in a cheerful mood. Madhav was a bit nervous as it was his first meeting with his in-laws to be but was excited too.

We crossed about halfway to home. Suddenly the rickshaw puller stopped the rickshaw, he bent down and picked something from the ground and was secretly keeping it in his pocket. I saw him. It was a wallet.

I stopped him. Is it a wallet? I asked.

Yes, he said.

I took that from him, opened it, there was two thousand five hundred rupees in it. I searched for some Id proof, but I didn't find anything. I got a bill issued from a cement shop named Anand Cement and it was issued for Shiv Stationers. There were phone numbers of buyer and seller. Madhav too wanted to return the wallet to its owner. He took out his mobile phone from his pocket to call on the given number.

Madhav was new to the city. He didn't know anything about the inhabitant. He started dialing the number.

Don't call from your personal phone Madhav it's not a good idea I said.

What should we do then? We should at least try to help. Should we call the police? He asked

I thought for a while nodded my head yes police can help us but wait we can't do that as well.

Why? What to do now? He asked eagerly.

“We don’t know the wallet’s owner if we call the police may be they will find the owner and if he will be a nice person he sure will accept the wallet, hopefully he will be thankful and happy too but What if the man will try to take undue advantage of this magnanimity? What if he claimed for more? What if he will say there are some more precious things that are missing now? What if he will start blaming us in reverse that we have stolen something? I know you want to help even I want the same but at what cost Madhav”, I said.

“The name Shiv Stationers reminds me a shop from where I have purchased some stuff in my school days if it is the same shop then it’s on our way. Let’s go and check”, I said.

We moved ahead by the same rickshaw, as we reached the shop, we saw it was closed. Madhav again insisted me to call; he thought if I know the shopkeeper what the big deal is then to call him. I made him understand, I know the shopkeeper but not sure that the bill is regarding the same person or address. May be any other shop also have the similar name. I told him that we can do one more thing lets go to Anand Cement, we will ask about the bill from there and will request to call the person (buyer) and return his bill. In that way the person himself will ask about the wallet from the shopkeeper of cement shop. Then maybe he himself will ask about the wallet and will describe about the things inside it. Madhav agreed with this. We asked the cement shop’s address from one or two person. They said it is near hanuman temple. One milk dairy man told us the exact address but he said the shop must be closed. Its timing is to 8am to 5pm and now its 6pm. So we gave-up this idea too.

Now I repented for impeded the rickshaw puller’s happiness. I thought I shouldn’t stop the rickshaw puller. I should let him take the wallet. Parents must be worried. They were waiting for us anxiously. Give this wallet to rickshaw puller Madhav, we don’t have any other option I said this in annoyance.

But Madhav denied. He said if we will give this wallet to the rickshaw puller the possibility of reaching the wallet to its owner will be zero. I will not give this to him.

The rickshaw puller was looking our faces he still had some hope to get the wallet back. Turn the rickshaw back to Shiv Stationers Madhav said peevishly.

We both were fed-up with the situation now and wanted to get rid of it.

I again was started blaming myself why did I stop him, it is nothing but wasting of time a wild goose chase. We both were tired and hungry and wanted to reach home now.

Rickshaw puller again took us to Shiv Stationers. As rickshaw stopped Madhav jumped down he went in the shop next to shiv stationers. I followed him. But till then he handed over the wallet to the shopkeeper. He was explaining the situation to him. The shopkeeper was assuring him that he is an honest man and the next morning he will return the wallet to its owner definitely.

I and rickshaw puller were now helplessly watching the situation. I was not happy with the decision, but didn’t ask any question. I didn’t have more patience and of course I didn’t want to argue with Madhav as it was his first visit, first day there.

We both sat on the rickshaw again and he dropped us to my home. We both were welcomed with love and

pamper. We had our dinner cooked by my mother. Madhav loved the food. He enjoyed a lot. Now he was comfortable.

My parents called Madhav's parents to discuss about our marriage dates. We all discussed and finalized the dates. Everyone was happy. I was happy too but somewhere regretting from inside. Madhav decided to go his hometown next morning so that he might be do the arrangements for our ring ceremony. He came to me to discuss about our marriage, how we will match our dress in every occasion and many more. We discussed a lot. In between the discussion I whispered we did the right thing today, at least the wallet will reach to its owner tomorrow.

"May be or may not be. Money is the best and the worst thing in the world. But we can expect it in some extent. It depends on the person's honesty to whom I gave the wallet. If he will be honest, will try to ask at least for once from Shiv Stationers but if I gave that to the rickshaw puller then there would be no chance of return. But you don't think about it, Radha. Let's not discuss about that. We have a lot more to discuss". Madhav smiled and said.

I was quiet. He was there for ten more minutes. He discussed about the similarities and the difference between both of our families, our wedding, and some more topics regarding our marriage. I was just listening or smiling sometime.

Knock knock, "It's 11: 30 go sleep both of you. Madhav you come with me, yours room is there, next to ours", mother said. I bade good night to both of them. They replied the same and left.

I tried to sleep but failed. The incident was roaming around my mind. I wished I could do something. I failed not only to help the owner, but also to the rickshaw puller. If I had not interfered, at least I would not have ruined the happiness of the rickshaw puller. If I would not have involved in all that I would also be enjoying my wedding plan today. Thinking all these I slept after some time.

The next morning, I woke up relaxed. I almost forgot everything which I really wanted to. I wanted to enjoy my wedding shopping and to spend some happy moments with my family and Madhav, as he was leaving that day for Budhaganj, which was his hometown.

"The dates are eighteen and twenty. So as you reach there, book the tickets, don't forget", my mother said. Madhav smiled.

"I will be here at sixteen with my family Maa. Eighteen is our engagement and twenty wedding so we also will have to do some arrangements here. Huh, I am very excited", Madhav said. We all laughed.

Time passed, everything took place perfectly as we had planned. It's been one year now as we celebrated our first wedding anniversary yesterday. But I am still not able to forget that incident. Sometimes we are unable to do what we want. Perhaps if we called the given number of Shiv Stationers, we would be able to help in true sense.

But what exactly is the cause of this kind of situation? Betrayal, embezzlement, the fear of being trapped or above all the notion of why do we care? Because of these reasons we begin to think about ourselves first. Deception is now the second name of the society. Where fear of evil and wrong is all around us. We have lost the powerful armor of truth and loyalty that protect us and show us the right path of goodness.

No one dares to change these situations. After all, we all are busy in our day to day life. We actually have become habituated to it now. We think just let it be whatever is happening. Why to set foot in the mess, take an alternate route or walk away from the situation.

CONCLUSIONS

I wish our world would not be like this. No one would fear to trust others. Then we would be able to do instead of thinking. Things would not be so tuff then.

Tuk-Tuk “Radha, get ready, we will leave in five minutes. I am done, you also wind up”, Misha said from the window. I gave her a quizzical look and started to put my stuff in my purse. I packed my memories too and started my daily routine. But time and the situation will never let me forget that ever.